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FINNY'S FUNNIES

Lighter-Side Indian Tales

THE TALE OF FALLING ROCKS

Once upon a time there was a beautiful Indian maiden by the name of Evening Song. Two braves, Falling Rocks and Running Bear, both wanted to marry her. Both were handsome and both were fast with their arrows. She liked both braves and could not make up her mind which one to choose for her future mate. Finally she suggested that the one who will slay the largest deer will become her huture husband. Both went in hunt of deer. A few days later Running Bear returned from the hunt with the largest deer she ever saw. But Falling Rocks failed to come back. However, Evening Song pledged that she would wait till Falling Rocks returns before she chooses the brave for marriage. Running Bear and Evening Song turned to the Highway Department for their assistance. This is why one sees signs when traveling through the mountains, reading: "Watch out for Falling Rocks!" (Contributed by Redwing Ordunez)

OCONOMOWOC

Some of you may wonder why a Wisconsin resort town has this peculiar name.

Once upon a time, many moons back, two Indian tribes were battling each other. One was finally losing ground and they were fleeing from the victor's hatchets. The losers reached a green lakesite in Wisconsin, on its shore was a stone. The old chief, war-worn and exhausted, sat down on the stone in despair, and in his "southern Indian" accent exclaimed: "O con no' mo' woc!" and they remained there. And so to this day they call that spot Oconomowoc.

SHEBOYGAN

Many moons back, on the shores of the blue Michigan in green Wisconsin, there was a young married brave whose wife presented him successively with five children, all girls. As he entered the wigwam after his wife presented him with a sixth female child he exclaimed in disgust: "What? She Boy Gain?" and left the tipi. And so they named that spot Sheboygan.

CREATION OF RACES

Many winters ago, when there were still no men upon earth, the Great Father Spirit wanted to populate the earth with mankind. He created a form of clay and placed it in the kiln. In his eagerness to have a perfect man the Great Spirit took the form out of the kiln. He looked it over, and said: Hooooo... He too pale, half baked." and threw it away. He then created another form and placed it in the kiln. This time, the Great Spirit thought he'll keep it in the kiln longer. But when he took the form out he discovered to his dismay that he kept it too long and overbaked it, for it became black. He threw this figure away, too. He made a third shape, and with this one he was most careful and took him out at the right moment. It was nicely browned and perfectly baked and the Great Spirit was very satisfied with this creation and from him descended all Amerindians. The Caucasians descended from that half-baked piece of clay, while the black races from the over-baked piece of clay. (Told by M. Ataloa, A Chikasaw Indian).

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WINNERS AT L. A. IRISH FEIS

The Los Angeles Irish held their 11th Annual Feis on May 19th at Mt. Carmel High School under the direction of Mrs. Edith Stevenson. There were 27 winners. The top three with most winnings were: Maureen McDonough — 5 gold and 1 silver; Lorrie Livernois — 4 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze; Joan Coleman — 3 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze. Tentative plans for this group is to attend the Feis in San Francisco on November 9-10 and the New York World Fair Irish Feis in 1964. Working with Mrs. Stevenson are the two MacEnteggart sisters; Mrs. Maureen Hall and Mrs. Nancy Desmond.

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YOUNG EAGLE DANCERS AT JEMEZ PUEBLO.

Foto Evelyn Dahl

THE CASUAL OBSERVER often remarks, "Oh you see one Indian dance and you've seen them all, just a monotonous jumping up and down". The lack of sophistication here is in the speaker rather than the Indian dancer. Indian dance-art is highly expressive in mood and manner, with complicated rhythms marked by frequent change.

One of the most graceful and intricate dances is the Eagle dance, part of a healing ritual and a ceremony for rain. The human body is limited to certain basic movements but the Eagle dance embodies all of them. It requires unusual skill and muscular control. A sense of responsibility, sacrifice, and reverence go into the training for ceremonial dances. The photo of baby eagles shows the early age at which this training begins.

Evelyn Dahl

INDIAN DANCES

By ATALOA

THE DUCK DANCE

(Okfo Chush Hila)

Legend of the Duck Dance

Long time ago the Great Mystery made all peoples, animals, birds, and other things that live on the earth, in water and in the sky. At first they understand each other even though they did not speak the same language. All were brothers as the Great Mystery intended.

One day, Okfochush (the Duck), called a council to decide how they could help Okla Chito (many people). Okla Chito had lost their houses and food when heavy rains came and covered all the low lands where they lived. They were hungry and began to complain and quarrel among themselves. Because all could not swim, some were drowned. After much talk, the Okfochush agreed that they could do most for their brothers, the Okla Chito, by teaching them how to dance for this was the good medicine that ended the troubles of the Okfochush long ago.

First, they told the Okla Chito what happened to the Okfochush when all the rivers and lakes dried up long time ago. At that time, they knew only how to swim they could not walk or fly. Inlache Peliche, leader of the Okfochush, received a message from the Great Mystery which told him that all hunger and other troubles would end if they would learn to sing and dance together. Inlache Peliche called out so loud that all the Okfochush could hear him... "HO-KE-LE-HO-O-O! When they followed him onto the banks of the rivers and lakes to look for food, they liked the feel of the soft, wet earth on their wet feet. Before they knew it, they began to laugh, sing and dance. The Walwa (turtle) heard the songs and came out to join them. The Walwa could not dance so well, so they decided to keep time by clapping their shells together. It was not long after that the Okfochush started to use their wings and fly. They even learned to walk well and after that, they flew or warked long distances for new homes and food.



Ataloa, best known Indian lady among the paleface folk dancers. She is a Chikasha Indian, a folklorist, lecturer and teacher of Art and Folklore at the Indian School of Santa Fe, N. M. She is a well-loved personality at the Idyllwild, California camp during the summer folkloric meets. Idyllwild Foto.

This is the story that old when they flew in all directions to help the Okla Chito in telling them how their troubles ended. They taught the Okla Chito how to laugh and dance together. Later, they even told them how to be good swimmers and how to fly. Now that is how Indians learned to do the Duck Dance. They use Walwa (turtle) shells which are tied with buckskin thongs, just below the knees of some of the dancers, to keep the dance rhythm. They often use a drum and rattles... sometimes, sticks, which they strike together. The dance goes on for many hours... everyone laughing and singing as they imitate the Okfochush diving under waves or walking along the banks of the river or lake.

How To Do The Duck Dance

The dancers form two lines. Partners face each other. holding hands and swaying from side to side as a duck walks or waddles. Lift the left foot slight; sway to the right, touching the right foot to the left. Repeat the same step with the right foot. Throughout the dance, the dancers move counter-clock-wise. When the leader calls (Ho-Ke-Le-Ho-o-o-o! the first couple turns sideways and passes under the raised hands, of the next couple like ducks going under water; never losing the rhythm. When the leader calls "Ho-Ke-Le-Ho-o-o - again, the same couple moves on down the line, while the end couple turns sideways and follows. Hands of the dancers forming the long line are not lifted (as waves), until the leader calls "Ho-Ke-Le- Ho-o-o!" This continues until the first couple reaches the end of the line. They turn and become part of the line that represents water and waves. The call is sustained for two measures in order that the drummers or those keeping time, will not break the rhythm. Dancers